

February 18, 2009

A called worksession of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, was held on February 18, 2009, in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:00 PM, with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Council Members present included: Mayor Kathy Lawson, Vice Mayor Kimble Reynolds, Gene Teague, Mark Stroud, Sr., and Danny Turner. Staff present included: Clarence Monday, City Manager, Leon Towarnicki, Brenda Prillaman, Eric Monday, Wayne Knox, Mike Rogers and Iris Read.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2008 Goals document: Council agreed to add in the Recreation category to explore a youth center; agreed to add in Community Development an item covering urban community gardens; Teague pointed out this a liquid and working document and other tasks and specific items can be added at a later time as needed; City Manager will work with Dr. Kizner on wording on the Education category; document is to be finalized and ready for Council approval at their February 24, 2009 meeting; Council requested the goals document be made available to public on the city's website.

Health care options: The City Manager briefly described the following recommendations for employee health care that were previously presented to Council in detail at their February 2 meeting:

Significantly reduce employee payroll contribution requirements to make the plan more competitive with peers and attract healthy dependents.

A. Modify the plan design to a High Deductible Health Plan complimented with tax savings accounts: Health Savings Account (HSA) and Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). Utilize reward incentives for healthy behavior changes.

B. Reduce out-of-network utilization with an improved provider network.

C. Leverage the results from the RFP with Anthem.

D. Use separate rate structure for active and retirees that reflects the higher claim utilization for retirees.

Increase employer contribution for active employees by at least 15%.

Institute a four-tier rate category so employee plus children becomes more affordable. Maintain the monthly retiree contribution of \$195.

He reported that since the Feb. 2 Council meeting, multiple meetings with employees have been held to gather feedback and further explain the health care plan. Human Resources Manager Iris Read reported approximately 150 employees have attended the meetings with the lower income bracket employees expressing concerns about the deductible. She reported that 122 employees make less than \$25,000 and 80 employees make less than \$20,000. Retirees are also concerned about the deductible. There was lengthy discussion by Council regarding what other localities are doing, flexibility for retirees as well as younger, lower paid employees, benefits of having incentive to encourage employees to maintain their health so rates won't go up, suggestions that certain salary thresholds be funded up front, questions on how many employees have city insurance, how many are not insured, and how many have individual policies. Council agreed to discuss further at the Feb. 24, 2009 Council meeting.

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Cable franchise: City Attorney Eric Monday briefed Council on the Comcast cable franchise which was originally adopted in 1998. He recommended that Council form a committee to review the franchise including county representatives to mirror the city representatives. Members should include City Attorney, Council member, two citizens, and one staff member. City Attorney Monday indicated the committee would make a wish list to begin negotiations as to what they want to see in their cable franchise. He responded to the question regarding current Adelphia bankruptcy claims stating there are no lawyer fees being paid at present. Council directed the City Manager to begin advertising for the two city citizen slots on the cable franchise review committee and Mr. Eric Monday will contact the County as well as Town of Ridgeway.

2010 Congressional Appropriation Request: City Manager Clarence Monday briefed Council on his meetings today with Perriello's staff members on the process for applying for congressional funds. He pointed out that the city would submit a prioritized list and other localities in the 5th district would also be in the pot. He suggested that applications be made to several committees leaning toward projects with a high return on investment. He advised that the city will score better if asking to continue for more funding in projects that have already been funded. One application for each project is due in Washington by Monday, February 23. Council discussed numerous projects at length. The City Manager asked that council allow staff to pull projects from the EDA list to get paperwork done by the deadline. The five projects to be submitted will be: (1) brownfield site-Sara Lee/American Furniture (2) energy efficient city hall & schools using facts gathered from energy audit (3) methane project at landfill (4) further development of a lot and electrical capacity at Clearview Business Park (5) Rives Road site development.

The City Manager reported Mike Scaffidi made a presentation at the EDC meeting regarding broadband and the city is presently looking at a \$25,000 grant to do a broadband study and partner with Henry County to pursue a planning grant to be in a position for economic stimulus funds.

There being no further business, Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Clarence C. Monday
Clerk of Council

Kathy C. Lawson
Mayor